

Intimate Information From the Realm of Make-Believe

David Griffith Confesses 'Way Down East' Looks Real Only Because It Is Real

By Harriette Underhill

"Way Down East" was nine months in the making and cost more than \$800,000, but we doubt if these figures impress any one very much. Usually the more a picture costs the less we like it, for vast fortunes are squandered on these huge spectacle things, where all the critics come out the next day and say that it was historically correct, or that it wasn't historically correct, and that dancing girls in Nero's time did or did not wear tunics.

But "Way Down East" is reassuring because you know that Mr. Griffith did not, could not have spent any of that \$800,000 in strings of beads for Nero's favorite, for palace walls to crumble up later, nor for Roman armies.

Even after you see the picture you wonder what makes it so expensive. Of course, as the young man from Boston who goes to the movies with us says, "It is thrilling, exciting and gripping," in fact more so than any picture we ever saw, but none of those things makes it a "gorgeous spectacle," nor puts it in the million dollar class. So we decided to talk to Mr. Griffith and find out all about it. "Way Down East" is a picture every one should see three times: the first time to see how perfect it is in every detail; the second time for the ice scenes and the third time for the ice scenes.

The second time we saw it was with the producer himself, and after their respective husbands and the people had stopped cheering we went up to the office of the Forty-fourth Street Theatre to talk it over. Mr. Griffith is one of the persons in whose presence we thrill. The others are Charlie Chaplin and Elsie Ferguson.

"Will you tell us the truth and will you answer any questions we want to ask about the picture?"

"Yes," answered the greatest director in the world, "if you don't ask me something I don't want you to know."

"Well," we said, starting off easy, "what makes 'Way Down East' so expensive?"

"Principally the ice," he gasped as though we had received a dash of cold water in our face.

"Oh, the ice," you had to buy it? Wasn't it real?" And we had visions of each refrigerator giving up its chunks and of property men dumping them into the river, perhaps a nice peaceful summer river, and all of our illusions were destroyed. We felt as though we had just learned that there was no Santa Claus.

"Oh, yes, of course the ice was real—too real. That is why it was so dangerous and cost so much money."

"And what is your next picture going to be? Do another 'Broken Blossoms'?" Mr. Griffith shook his head.

"You couldn't," he challenged. "That still remains the most beautiful picture we ever have seen or ever hope to see."

"And yet I'll warrant you that ten persons will like this one where one liked 'Broken Blossoms.' It was not a play for the masses. It was not a failure, but neither was it a great financial success. Over in Europe, however,"

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Scene From "Blue Bonnet"



Ernest Truex and Mona Thomas in George Scarborough's Delightful play of the Mexican Border

ever, it has far exceeded the record of any other picture ever shown there. "Which is a sad little way of saying that they are going to like this picture. Why, every one who came out of the theater said it was the best picture they had ever seen. There is only one suggestion: When the heroine is driven out into the blizzard, won't you please have the orchestra play."

"Annie Moore, sweet Annie Moore. We'll never see sweet Annie any more."

"We, the People"

"We, the People," will be presented under the patronage of the Constitutional League of America at Carnegie Hall on the evening of September 17. This will be a reproduction of the historical events which took place 133 years ago, giving birth to the nation.

What's What in New York Theaters

BELASCO—See new theatrical offerings.

BELMONT—"Little Miss Charity." Intimate musical comedy.

BIJOU—"A Man of the People." Another Lincoln play.

BOOTH—"Happy-Go-Lucky." Amusing English comedy.

BROADHURST—"Come Seven." Blackface farce.

CASINO—"Honeydew." Zimbalist's musical comedy.

CENTRAL—"Poor Little Ritz Girl." A Lew Fields musical production.

CENTURY PROMENADE—"The Century Revue" at 9 and "The Midnight Rounders" at 11:30.

COHAN—"Genius and the Crowd." Troubles of a virtuoso.

COHAN & HARRIS—See new theatrical offerings.

COMEDY—"The Bad Man." Holbrook Blinn, a Mexican bandit.

CORT—"Abraham Lincoln," poetic, historical drama.

CRITERION—"The Right to Love." A motion picture.

ELTINGE—"Ladies' Night." Turkish bath farce.

EMPIRE—"Call the Doctor." Belasco comedy production.

FORTY-EIGHTH STREET—"Opportunity." A play of Wall Street.

FRAZEE—"The Woman of Bronze." Margaret Anglin in play from French.

FULTON—"Scrambled Wives." Another comedy production.

GAITY—"Lightnin'." Frank Bacon in comedy of Reno's divorce industry.

GARRICK—"Enter Madame." Gilda Varese featured.

GLOBE—George White's "Scandals of 1920." Summer entertainment.

GREENWICH VILLAGE—"The Greenwich Village Follies—1920."

HENRY MILLER'S—"The Famous Mrs. Fair." Henry Miller and Blanche Bates.

HIPPONDROME—"Good Times." Old and new favorites in extravaganza.

HUDSON—"Crooked Gamblers." An A. H. Woods play of high finance.

KNICKERBOCKER—"The Sweetheart Shop." Musical comedy.

LIBERTY—"The Night Boat," musical, farcical comedy.

LITTLE—"Foot-Loose," story of an adventures.

LONGACRE—"The Cave Girl." Female "Admirable Crichton."

LYCEUM—"The Gold Diggers." Ina Claire in a comedy of chorus girl life.

MAXINE ELLIOTT'S—"Spanish Love." A Continental novelty.

MOROSCO—"The Bat." Thrilling mystery play.

NEW AMSTERDAM—"Ziegfeld Follies." Fourteenth of the series.

NEW AMSTERDAM ROOF—Art Hickman's band. Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic.

PARK—"Poldeklin." George Arliss in Tarkington play.

PLAYHOUSE—"Seeing Things." Farce by Margaret Mayo and Aubrey Kennedy.

PLYMOUTH—"Little Old New York." A romantic comedy.

PRINCESS—"Blue Bonnet." Ernest Truex, a cowpuncher.

REPUBLIC—"The Lady of the Lamp." Chinese fantasy.

SHUBERT—"Paddy the Next Best Thing." Comedy.

SELWYN—"Tickle Me." Frank Tinney vehicle.

THIRTY-NINTH STREET—"The Charm School." Light comedy.

VANDERBILT—"Irene," girl and music comedy.

WINTER GARDEN—"Cinderella on Broadway." Extravaganza.

Slapstick, With Science Behind It, Wins Applause, Declares Marie Dressler

"That indescribable something which is in all of us that causes us involuntarily to laugh when we see a man slip on a banana peeling is the part of an audience's nature which we depend on and which never fails us," says Marie Dressler, who is appearing in "Cinderella on Broadway" at the Winter Garden. "Serious-minded people scoff, but the fact remains that the bad boy who likes to pull the chair from under the sedate grown-up is eternal and never forsakes a really alive adult."

"There is Charlie Chaplin, the greatest motion picture artist we have. Chaplin had his immense following long before the crisis began to recognize that he had an artist's soul. And the curious fact is that when the critics discovered this they berated his methods, his noisy (if one may say so of the silent screen), or rather his audible silence, but it was his manner of doing these things that showed him an artist. Chaplin expresses a human characteristic, and therein he is a great artist. Let no one underrate any honest human emotion."

"Don't let any one think I want to play Lady Macbeth, though I should love to play her as I see her. She would cause intense fun, but I seriously contend that to play Lady Macbeth as I would 'do' her would require as much art as Modjeska gave the part when she thrilled the world. A little bit more I should like to add to the rôle, that seeing Lady Macbeth from the funny side, is the keynote to my style of work. We look at life so-

lemnly, too solemnly, and then we laugh. Our audience, made up of men and women who are serious the whole day long, revel in being made to realize that the sense of the ludicrous underlies even our most tragic moments."

"Audiences come to the theater expecting to see me tumble about the stage. They are disappointed if I don't. So I tumble about; I fall through chairs; I trip over my gown; I exaggerate; I play the clown; but never do I forget that there is a science in it. Every comedian wants to play Hamlet, they say. This is because he sees the humor of Hamlet's life and he feels something in Hamlet's nature no tragic actor has ever expressed."

"I have always been struck by the success that invariably follows a good burlesque of a serious play. This is because audiences, having been intrigued to take in earnest some phase of life, like the reaction, like the knowledge, whether they analyze it or not, that there is ever the comic side to every situation."

"It is much more difficult to make a man laugh than cry. It is not just falling over chairs or downstairs; it is the doing of it in such a way that the ludicrous is predominant without being absurd."

Glimpse of the New Plays; Two Openings Are Due This Week

Continued from preceding page

guiding genius of "The Birth of a Nation," that highly successful motion picture which was made from Mr. Dixon's "The Clansman."

On Tuesday Thomas Dixon will head southward for Atlanta, where preparations are being made for the presentation of his play "Robert E. Lee" on September 20. He will supervise the final steps in making it ready for the stage. "Robert E. Lee" is a chronicle play, very much on the order of John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln." Striking episodes in the Southern general's career are presented.

Plans about John Barrymore's season are more or less shrouded in mystery at the present writing, with no definite announcement from any source of his appearance on the New York stage. Rumors there are a plenty. One that stands out is to the effect that he will become his own manager and appear in "Richard III" and other plays that he has been considering. Another, regarded with weight in certain quarters, is that he will soon be seen again, under the management of Arthur Hopkins, in a continuation of "Richard III," interrupted by his unfortunate break-down last season.

New Contract for Withey

Chet Withey, who directed Norma Talmadge in a number of her pictures, has just signed a contract with Joseph Schenck to direct two or more pictures for Constancia. Mr. Withey is reading scripts, while Miss Talmadge is abroad with her sister, Norma.

At the Rialto Theater



Constancia Binney in "39 East"

In Booth Tarkington's "Poldeklin"



George Arliss and Elsie Mackay

Motion Picture Titles Big Factor in the Success or Failure of Screen Works

Titles, in the opinion of Kathryn Stuart, well known Paramount-Artcraft scenario writer, can either make or break a picture. No matter how clever or inspired a production or theme may be, clumsy, inadequate titles can, and in nine cases out of ten will, mark it for untimely consignment to the scrapheap of mediocre, soon-forgotten pictures.

"It is an acknowledged fact," she says, "that the art of the photoplay has taken great strides forward in the last two years, both from the angle of the scenarioist and the producer; but this does not necessarily mean that pre-cut standards of production are near the peak of perfection. There are still many points at issue which call for close attention and improvement, and the matter of satisfactory titles is one which we cannot well afford to overlook."

"Titles serve a threefold purpose—to create the atmosphere of the story, to explain and further the action and to accentuate characterization. The atmospheric title as we know it to-day is inclined to be prolix and splashy, little more than an excuse for the title writer to indulge in what would seem to be his pet passion for grandiloquent outbursts of mixed metaphors and scrambled similes. Some of the verbal pyrotechnics motion picture audiences accept with apparent equanimity would be laughable were they not downright pathetic. Yet, in many cases, these atrocities committed in the name of literature are perpetrated with the best intentions in the world. There is no doubt in the minds of these could-be Ruskins and Walter Paters that they are elevating the literary tone of the screen."

"The ideal title, of course, is one that is so in harmony with the flow of the dramatic action that it blends in with the movement of the story without conscious effort, creating the impression of a perfect, coordinated structure. Not only should it do this, but it should serve as a sort of dramatic throat, opening a notch or two at certain strategic points in the action to speed the story more quickly and directly along toward its climax. Verbose, lengthy titles, which the dramatic action and weary the audience unconsciously, besides making the story clumsy and hard to follow."

At the Strand



Lionel Barrymore in "The Master Mind"

Theatres under direction of Hugo Riesenfeld

RIVOLI
Broadway at 49th St.

CRITERION
Broadway at 44th St.

RIALTO
Times Square

CHARLES RAY
in
"The Village Sleuth"
Paramount Picture

THE RESTLESS SEX
with Marlon Davies
By Robert W. Chambers
Cosmopolitan production
Paramount Picture

CONSTANCE BINNEY
in
"39 EAST"
with the Star and Cast
that won a triumph on the
Broadway speaking stage
Realart Picture

"DONT WEAKEN"
Paramount-Sennett Comedy
TROPICAL NIGHTS
Bruce Educational Scenic

Setting for Prologue
by JOSEPH URBAN

"DONT BLAME THE STORK"
Christie Comedy

Rivoli Concert Orchestra
Frederick Stahlberg and
Joseph Littau, Conducting

Melody of Flowers
Scenic and Music

Famous Rialto Orchestra
Hugo Riesenfeld and
Lionel Vanderheim, Conducting

Priscilla Bonner in "Honest Hutch"



Priscilla Bonner in "Honest Hutch"

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with 10 PEOPLE
MASTERS & KRAFT PREVOST & GOULET
DOLLY KAY DONOVAN & LEE
"A TRIP TO HITLAND"
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A FIRST NATIONAL ATTRACTION
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SELECTION FROM "THE FIREFLY" FRIML
PERMANO GUARNERI ESTELLE CAREY RAOU ROMITO
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NEW HAROLD LLOYD COMEDY
"GET OUT AND GET UNPER"

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Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30
Charles Frohman Inc. & David Belasco
Present
DAVID BELASCO Presents
"CALL THE DOCTOR"
"RAREST OF ALL THINGS"
"A NEW IDEA"
"REALLY FUNNY, WHAT A JOY"
"A DELIGHTFUL BELASCO HIT"
"SMARTLY WRITTEN, EXCEEDINGLY AMUSING"
Hugobert Brown, Tribune
With a Cast Including
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BELASCO THEATRE
44th St., near Broadway
TUESDAY NIGHT, 8:15
DAVID BELASCO ANNOUNCES THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF MISS FRANCES STARR IN "ONE" A NEW PLAY BY EDWARD KNOBLOCK
FIRST MATINEES THURSDAY AND SATURDAY.

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LIBERTY THEATRE
WED. & SAT.
LAST 2 WEEKS
—OF—
John Drinkwater's
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WITH
FRANK McGLYNN
CORT THEATRE
MATS. WED. & SAT.
CORT BEGINS MON., SEPT. 27
JOHN CORT will offer
THE MUSICAL PASTIME
JIM JAM JEMS
—OF— MAIL ORDERS NOW

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SAM H. HARRIS announces
WELCOME STRANGER
A COMEDY BY AARON HOFFMAN
WITH A SELECTED CAST INCLUDING
GEORGE SIDNEY, EDMUND DREESE, DAVID HIGGINS, BEN JOHNSON, E.L. SNADER, CHARLES I. SCHOFIELD, FRANK HERBERT, JOHN ADAIR, JR., DAVID ADLER, JULES J. BENNETT, PERCIVAL LENNON, MARGARET MOWER, MARY BRANDON, VALERIE HICKERSON, ISADORA MARTIN

GEO. COHAN THEATRE B'way 43d St. Eve. 8.20. M. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2.20.
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"One hundred per cent. COHAN—Thundering applause."—Sun-Herald.
"Audience called loudly and persistently for the producer."—American.
"Employing with the COHAN traditions."—Post.
"Entertains steadily from beginning to end."—Globe.
"Diving comedy—COHAN in every speech and action."—Eve. World.
"Destined for a long run."—Telegram.
"A pleasant play and interesting."—Mail.
"Has the magical COHAN touch—A COHAN success."—Eve. Sun.
"A COHAN triumph—entire cast adequate."—Telegram.
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MATS. WED. & SAT. 2.00 & 2.25
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ART HICKMAN ORCHESTRA
JOHN GOLDEN presents